

A PAGE FOR WOMEN AND THE HOME

THE DAILY SHORT STORY

MASQUERADING

By VINCENT G. PERRY.
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HESTER HALL, carefully arranged his skirts as he settled in the big comfortable chair among the palms, took a powder and added a touch to his hair with a comb and brush. He was not on straight and his hair was not coming off, he put his neatly slipped feet out, displaying more than a foot of silk hose, and sat back, feeling himself contented. Although from all appearances he was the personification of serenity, a fire of resentment burned within him. He was an idiot to have allowed the masquerade in that costume, he thought. Masquerade was all right, but it was a different thing at a dance. For the first time in his career he was experiencing what it was to be a wallflower, and it more than galvanized him.

If only he were not such a good impersonator and had not so much imagination as to keep up. If he hadn't danced every girl in the place it would have been so awkward, but things had gone so far that he wouldn't make under any circumstances. He knew he was a girl, none of the girls would dance with him, and the boys were in on the joke and wouldn't waste a dance on him. Besides, he didn't care for a dance with a boy; what pleasure would there be in that?

But the most galling part of it all was the presence, or the expected presence, of the girl he had been waiting months to meet. When he thought of that the fanning stopped. It was known that she was going to be there. A million dollars would not have tempted him to appear in that costume. He had wanted to make a good impression the first time they met, and if he was introduced to her as he was she would think at once that he was an idiot and would have nothing further to do with him. Her letters would stop, and everything would be over. Even her brother Bob, his chum and room-mate, would not be able to fit it up, he was sure. What kind of friends was Bob, anyway, to let him come dressed as a girl, and not to tell him that she was going to be there until they arrived and it was too late to back out? But he couldn't feel toward Bob that way. He thought through him he had got into correspondence with Muriel, and her letters had been the most interesting part of his college life. If he could get away without revealing who he was it would be all right, but he was anxious to have a look at Bob's sister before he left. If she was anything like the picture she was a beauty. Apparently she wasn't on the floor, for the position he had taken gave him a full view of the ballroom, and he was sure he would recognize her the minute his eyes lit upon her.

The music was wonderful and Chester could hardly keep his feet still. Oh, that would be given to have had that two-step with Muriel. If that air kept up he couldn't keep off the floor much longer he thought. There was no partner about, but if someone didn't come and ask him to dance he would get out and do a solo. A faint cough beside him caused him to look up. A very slender young man dropped into the seat next to him. As their eyes met Chester dropped his head. He had remembered his role. But the one glance had been sufficient to size up the young man. He was a gawk and it was his first time out. Chester could see. The dress suit looked out of place on him. He was to shy to ask any of the girls to dance—but how

could he stay out of it with the music like that, Chester couldn't see. Here was his opportunity to have a dance and at the same time help the gawk get over his shyness.

He rose, smiled in the boy's face and said, as coyly as he could: "Please be my partner for the next dance."

It wasn't the proper thing for a young lady to do, but Chester was sure the gawk wouldn't know that. He had seen shy boys in his life, but this one was shyer than he had ever imagined. Although Chester put out his arm invitingly, the fellow stood in embarrassed bewilderment. The music was as entrancing as ever, and Chester couldn't stay off the floor any longer. Before the young man could stammer refusal he was whisked onto the floor, and he had to dance to save his feet from being trampled. After Chester had stepped on his toes a number of times, the gawk seemed to realize what was expected of him, and before the second time around he was dancing very well.

So far so good, Chester thought. But it was his duty to break this young fellow into the methods to employ with the task set. With this in view he started to chatter gaily in the sweetest effeminate tone he could assume, but the boy wouldn't talk, and Chester was exasperated. The music stopped and Chester applauded loudly for an encore. His partner stood like the gawk.

He thought he was, and he felt like kicking him. When they started out on this encore he thought of another course of action. It would be a shame to let such a good dancer become a fixture.

"You chump! Why don't you talk?" he said in his natural voice. "If you expect to get in soft with the girls you'll have to talk a little. Girls hate to dance with blocks of wood, even though they can dance as well as you can. You are an splendid dancer, and if you only could talk the girls would take you up in a minute."

The look of horror on his partner's face made Chester feel like stopping for a good laugh, but instead he explained: "I am a boy dressed up as a girl, and I'm having the time of my life. Why didn't you wear a fancy costume?"

"You didn't seem to be enjoying it much," the boy spoke for the first time, and apparently he was suffering from a cold.

"I had a little in the dumps when you came, I'll confess," Chester laughingly answered. "I wish I had worn another costume. I'm too good at female impersonation, that is the trouble, and I was shut out of all the dances. The boys are on to it because none of the girls are on to it. I am a boy. Besides, the only girl I am to-night, and I wanted to make a good impression. I won't be able to meet her now because of this costume."

"Why not?"

"Because she doesn't know I'm such an idiot. You see, I have never met her. I have just written to her, and got letters back. She's my room-mate's sister, and the finest little girl on earth."

"I'd like to meet her."

Chester gasped. The gawk was learning fast. Before he could speak again the encore had ended and his partner had led him back to the palms. The boy sat down in the chair, apparently exhausted.

"You silly thing, get up. I'm supposed to be a girl, and—" but Chester finished with an exclamation of surprise. A curl was hanging down from the "boy's" head. The straight black hair was a wig.

"You're a girl!" Chester gasped. "And you're a boy," the girl laughed. "Who are you?"

But before the girl could answer Bob Merrill, Chester's chum, came from behind a big palm and introduced them.

"So you are Muriel, and heard all I said about you," Chester groaned after

he recovered sufficiently to find voice.

"Yes, but what does it matter?" Muriel smiled. "This waltz is going to be a splendid one. I have my eyes tucked up, so if you will let me lead you to the floor I'll promise to talk a little."

MANNINGTON

Will Consult Specialist.
George Herby, former B. and O. agent at Glover Gap, now located at Fairpoint, Ohio, was here for a few days this week, preparatory to going with this wife to San Antonio, Texas, where he will consult a specialist in regard to an illness of the latter.

Aged Citizen Ill.
Golden M. Floyd is confined to his home one mile west of the city by a severe illness. Mr. Floyd is past eight years of age.

Workmen Arrive.
A number of bricklayers arrived here yesterday morning from distant points. The men will be employed by the Construction company at Downs.

Service Flag for K. of P.
The local K. of P. Lodge has received a service flag which is probably the largest in the city, measuring six by eight feet. Each star will represent a member who is in U. S. military service, the name of each entry being worked into the material. The flag will be publicly displayed tomorrow at the hall.

Called by Sister's Death.
Mr. and Mrs. James Enty and two daughters left yesterday for Pittsburgh, Pa., having been called there by the death of the former's sister.

Gambling House Raided.
In a round-up of a gambling house on Railroad street Tuesday evening fourteen patrons of the place were arrested including the proprietor. At their appearance before the mayor each participant was fined a small amount, while the owner added the sum of \$160 to the city treasury.

Former Residents Visit.
Mr. and Mrs. David C. Carey, former residents of Mannington, arrived yesterday for a visit with friends. At present they are guests of Mr. and Mrs. William N. Way in Beatty avenue.

Goes to Hospital.
Mrs. James T. Criss, of Big Run, a few miles from here, was taken to Fairmont on an afternoon car yesterday suffering from gall stones. Mrs. Criss will undergo a surgical operation at Cook hospital by Dr. H. L. Criss, her son.

Director Ill.
Miss Freda Taney, physical director in the local high school, is confined to her rooms in Center street because of a severe illness for the past few days.

Interesting Display.
A number of specimens of quicksilver lead, copper and other ores, and an ostrich egg which are on display in the show window of the First National Bank, are attracting the attention of pedestrians. The souvenirs were brought from Arizona by Virgil Baker, who has just returned from a visit to that state.

War Savings Campaign.
The Mannington Community Service committee held a meeting in the Bank of Mannington Tuesday evening at which action looking to a permanent organization was put forward one week, owing to the large number of or-

ganizations which have thus far failed to name representatives to assist in perfecting a permanent organization. Action, however, was taken by those present to boom the campaign now on for the sale of government War Savings and Thrift stamps. Committees were appointed to take up the work systematically in the community, and it was decided to observe the two coming Saturdays, January 26 and February 2, as Thrift days, on which special drives will be made for the sale of War Savings Stamps.

South for Remainder of Winter.
Mrs. Mary Coleman and grand-daughter, Miss Harriett Coleman, have gone to Orlando, Florida, where they will spend the remainder of the winter.

Send Thanks for Package.
Mrs. C. C. Wells has received a letter from Samuel B. McGee, of the U. S. Naval Service, sending his thanks for his Christmas package sent by Mrs. Wells through the Red Cross. The letter which was sent from Norfolk, Va., tells of his having made two trips to France on the Battleship Iowa, and of the miserable treatment of the French people who have come under the domination of the enemy. He speaks of the royal reception of the "Iowa" upon their landing in that country, and is profuse in his thanks for the favors extended by the public upon his departure from that country.

Hotel Arrivals.
Bartlett—Chas. Zinn, Parkersburg; J. E. Brady, Parkersburg; M. H. Deans, Ralph Watson, Washington, Pa.; J. O. Grisamore, Philadelphia, Pa.; E. H. Hart, Martins Ferry, O.; J. H. Gilroy, Detroit, Mich.; G. I. Musler, C. C. Reed, Roanoke, Va.; S. R. Tymstra, Detroit, Mich.
Wells—G. C. Corley, J. E. Eraver, F. L. McNary, Parkersburg; L. Smith, Wheeling; Alex. Sepicon, Wheeling; E. W. Jenkins, Fairmont; Paul V. Post, Buckhannon; H. House, Frank Hockenberry, Chas. Kerr, John Kline, Geo. Ganoce, Wheeling; G. H. Hercules, Belaire, O.; Wm. Hixenbaugh, Martins Ferry, O.

Personal.
Ernest R. Conaway, of the Hess Hardware company, attended the Hardware Dealers' convention at Fairmont this week.
S. N. Elliott left yesterday for a business visit in Pittsburgh.

David Henry, of McMechen, has accepted his old position at the Magers barber shop.

Benj. F. Wells, of Glover Gap, was a business visitor in the city yesterday.

E. N. Paul left yesterday for a business visit in Wheeling.

Ernest Guilford left for Duquesne, Pa., where he will accept employment. Mrs. Guilford remaining here for the present.

Miss Pansy Cunningham left yesterday for a visit with friends in Fairmont.

Mrs. J. R. Smith and children have

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Gage Hats

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gone to Cameron for a visit with the former's mother, Mrs. D. M. Mackey.

Howard Morgan, of Clarksburg, was a guest of Thomas Downs, at the latter's home in Howard street yesterday.

F. L. McNary, of Clarksburg, was here yesterday for a business visit.

Miss Pauline Yost, of Glover Gap, was the guest of friends in the city yesterday.

Lawrence Hoffman has gone to Pittsburgh, Pa., for a business visit.

John Dell, of The Woolen Mills, spent yesterday in Wheeling on business.

Mrs. Loveland, of Fairmont, is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Mitchell, in Houghtown.

Dr. Martens, of Chicago, Ill., the chiropodist, will be here tomorrow on business connected with his profession.

C. L. Cottrill has gone to Parkersburg on a business visit.

Miss Helen Rymer has returned from a few days visit with Miss Lelah Williamson in Fairmont.

Paul Girard and Charles Rymer have returned from a sojourn with friends at Bingamon.

Master Lynn Rymer returned from a visit with Masters Robert and Elbert Goodwin at Fairmont yesterday.

Meats at Federer's, 111 Fairmont Ave. Phone 118-R.—Adv.

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CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

We have been around to some of the orphan asylums today, little book, and oh, how I wanted to take all those blessed motherless babies in my arms and carry them home with me, there to give them individual care and comfort. Perhaps babies are better cared for wholesale in a scientific and sanitary manner, but I don't know.

I believe Charlotte Perkins Gilman has decided that is the best way to mother children, and that after experimentation and observation. This may be Mrs. Gilman's opinion, but it is not mine.

Not having eyes, my little confidant you have never seen the look on a mother's face as she clasps her baby in her arms. It is the most beautiful, all-pervading illustration of unselfish love that I have ever observed.

Not having ears, little book, you have not heard that indescribable, articulate expression of pure enjoyment and content that a baby gives when its little moist mouth touches its mother's breast. To me that is the holiest picture in all this world.

Donna had determined that she would adopt a girl if she could find one that pleased her. To hear her babble you would think that she intended to take a new-born angel who had strayed to this mundane sphere by mistake.

"It must have brown eyes like yours, Margie," she said.

"And red hair like mine, too," I suggested smilingly, for I knew that Donna detested red hair.

"Oh, no, my dear, no," she interrupted quickly. "I don't want her to have red hair." Proud as you are of yours, Margie, I have always considered it your greatest defect.

"And pray what are my others, dear kind and sincere friend?" I asked in mock annoyance.

"I won't stop to go into the subject today," was Donna's laughing answer, "because I don't want you to be too unhappy about your appearance."

Just then we arrived at the orphanage. We told our errand to the good sister in charge and were ushered into a big room where there were big babies and little babies, laughing babies and cross babies, pretty babies and ugly babies, robust babies and frail babies, but alas all of them were motherless babies, little book, and oh, how I did yearn to do something for them.

world alone unless some good woman took them and held them to heart and soul.

The good sister brought to Donna's attention a baby that almost answered the description that she had given me of the child she would adopt. Great brown eyes and soft curls of gold, dimples like Donna's own and a darling mouth that was curled into a baby smile.

Donna held the child in her arms for a long time and her lips rested on the downy head. Suddenly from across the room came a little crooning voice and both Donna and I turned to look in the direction of the sound. There, on the other side of the room, sat a baby in a go-cart. He was an ugly baby, a boy, with carrot hair and a wide mouth. He had small but twinkling gray eyes which were fringed with long, curling eyelashes that were the only beauty about his whole face.

Again Donna kissed the dear golden curls that covered the head of the baby in her arms, but her eyes traveled across the room to the crooning baby in the cart.

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LOST!

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R. GILKESON, Agent

DOINGS OF THE DUFFS—(TOM WILL TAKE NO CHANCES WITH EITHER WILBUR OR DYNAMITE.)—BY ALLMAN.

